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C O N F I D E N T I A L RIYADH 001484

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ARP, EEB/ESC/IEC (MONOSSON), S/CIEA
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TAGS: [ENRG](#) [PREL](#) [SENV](#) [SA](#)

SUBJECT: DANISH AMBASSADOR IN SAUDI: EAGER FOR U.S.
LEADERSHIP AT COPENHAGEN SUMMIT

REF: A. RIYADH 1302

[1](#)B. RIYADH 1464

Classified By: Ambassador James B. Smith for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Danish Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Christian Konigsfeldt told Ambassador Smith November 3 that his country was eager for U.S. leadership at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 15th Conference of the Parties (COP), which Denmark is hosting in Copenhagen December 6 to 17. Asked about the Administration's efforts to address climate change, Ambassador Smith outlined U.S. domestic efforts, including the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act's \$80 billion clean energy stimulus and increased fuel efficiency standards. Konigsfeldt acknowledged that the Administration's actions to address climate change to date were positive, but expressed concern that they may not necessarily lead to an agreement in December. Konigsfeldt lamented that without a clear U.S. position coming into the conference, other countries would not work towards agreement in Copenhagen and would "hide behind" the U.S. position.

[1](#)2. (C) Asked about Saudi Arabia's role in climate change negotiations, Konigsfeldt said that Saudi desire to continue to be considered a developing country with regard to carbon emissions was counterproductive. He said he had "no idea" how to get Saudi Arabia on board with the negotiations, but said his Foreign Minister was a knowledgeable and talented negotiator and the best candidate for the task.

[1](#)3. (C) Comment: We have the impression that other missions in Riyadh including the European Commission have only minimally engaged the Saudis on climate change. A more concerted, unified effort to engage Saudi Arabia on its climate change goals in the coming month may make for more productive negotiations in December. In a November 7 meeting with Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources Al-Naimi, Ambassador Smith was briefed on the three King Abdullah University for Science and Technology (KAUST) pillars of "environment, energy, and technology." We recommend the best avenue of engagement on environment with Saudi Arabia is through Minister Al-Naimi's office. End comment.
SMITH